

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES FOR THE
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF ALABAMA, NORTHERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)
) CRIMINAL ACTION NO.
v.) 2:07cr90-MHT
)
STEPHANIE WASHINGTON)

ORDER

This cause is before the court on defendant Stephanie Washington's unopposed oral motion to continue trial. Based on the reasons set forth below, the court concludes that the motion should be granted and jury selection and trial, now set for August 6, 2007, should be continued pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(8).

While the granting of a continuance is left to the sound discretion of the trial judge, United States v. Stitzer, 785 F.2d 1506, 1516 (11th Cir.), cert. denied, 479 U.S. 823, 107 S. Ct. 93 (1986), the court is limited by the requirements of the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161. The Act provides in part:

"In any case in which a plea of not guilty is entered, the trial of a defendant charged in an information or

indictment with the commission of an offense shall commence within seventy days from the filing date (and making public) of the information or indictment, or from the date the defendant has appeared before a judicial officer of the court in which such charge is pending, whichever date last occurs."

§ 3161(c)(1). The Act excludes from the 70-day period any continuance based on "findings that the ends of justice served by taking such action outweigh the best interest of the public and the defendant in a speedy trial." § 3161(h)(8)(A). In granting such a continuance, the court may consider, among other factors, whether the failure to grant the continuance "would deny counsel for the defendant ... reasonable time necessary for effective preparation, taking into account the exercise of due diligence." § 3161(h)(8)(B)(iv).

The court concludes that, in this case, the ends of justice served by granting a continuance outweigh the interest of the public and Washington in a speedy trial.

A continuance is warranted to enable Washington more time to prepare for the trial and to negotiate a plea.

Accordingly, it is ORDERED as follows:

(1) Defendant Stephanie Washington's oral motion to continue trial is granted.

(2) The jury selection and trial, now set for August 6, 2007, are reset for September 17, 2007, at 10:00 a.m., in Courtroom 2FMJ of the Frank M. Johnson Jr. United States Courthouse Complex, One Church Street, Montgomery, Alabama.

DONE, this the 15th day of June, 2007.

/s/ Myron H. Thompson
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE